



CHILDREN'S BOOK
COLLECTION



LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

905 Ward

1043

EF. I - 1











See Page 107.

THE
HISTORY OF ANN
AND HER
ELEVEN SISTERS;
Displaying the various
ADVENTURES THEY ENCOUNTERED
IN
THEIR TRAVELS,
&c. &c.

LONDON:

Printed and Published by J. FAIRBURN, 110, Minor Street.

HISTORY OF AN

AND THE

ELVEN SISTERS.

Illustrating the various

ADVENTURES THEY ENCOUNTERED

THEIR TRAVELS

AND

LONDON:

Printed and Published by J. FAIRBURN, 10, St. Martin's Lane.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is to be hoped that the following pages will prove of essential service to the inquisitive minds of Juvenile Readers, and that the book will not only be admitted into the Seminary, but the Nursery. It aims to improve the mind morally, and to inforce the belief of a Divine Providence, which eventually will reward the virtuous, and punish the obstinate and hardened offender.

ADVERTISEMENT.

It is to be hoped that the following pages will prove of essential service to the inquisitive minds of Juvenile Readers, and that the book will not only be admitted into the Seminary, but the University. It aims to improve the mind morally, and to enforce the belief of a Divine Providence, which eventually will reward the virtuous, and punish the obstinate and hardened offender.

THE
HISTORY OF ANN

AND HER
ELEVEN SISTERS.

AMONG the high and rude mountains of Thistle-land, formerly lived a very honest and industrious farmer, named Francis Furrow. His wife was as good a woman as any in that part, and much better than many of those who looked down with contempt upon her humble occupation and frugal fare : but every person of sense knows that indigence is often the award of God, and that opulence in this world does not insure us a bit the better place in the next ; for the seats of eternal bliss are not designed for the most wealthy but the most virtuous,

who will then be elevated far above their proud and scornful neighbours.

Mrs. Furrow brought her husband twelve fine daughters, who partook of the good example set by their parents, always observing to behave with obedience at home and condescension abroad. The little education they had gathered was received from the village school, and from their mother, who had been well brought up, and might have married a more eligible man than Francis, if love had not intervened.

They improved that time other children often spend in idleness, and hence their utility kept pace with their acquirements. They were often invited out, and this was for them a time of observation, so that they never returned with less knowledge than they went out, and always with a second invitation. Emily indeed always seemed to have more ambition than her sisters, and looked upon gay dresses and fine things as necessary to happiness, but Francis curbed those idle notions by often remarking that fine clothes concealed many an aching heart. If she could know the real condition of those her inexperience envied, she would find them all under the controul of some

wish they could not obtain, or compelled to perform some tasks which they would perhaps change conditions with the poor to avoid.

Soon, however, the little cottage where they had lived so long in peace and content, was destined to witness no more the scenes of harmless merriment it had often seen within and without its doors. Sheltered by the overhanging brow of the rock, they little thought to be overwhelmed by that crag which they had considered as a shelter from the sun in summer and the drifted snow in winter. One day a sudden gust of wind shook the trees on its summit; they were loosened with the weight of rain, and on the third day after the whole gave way, and in its fall brought down a mass of stone and earth more than sufficient to destroy the humble fabric. The children were out at school or visiting, and no one was in danger but their beloved mother. The shock alarmed the neighbouring cottagers, who ran with their spades and mattocks to clear away the ruins, and try if they could save the life of the farmer's wife. After much toil they found her—a pitiable object indeed to behold.—Tenderly taking up

the bleeding limbs of their neighbour, they placed her on a feather bed, and laid that on a wicker gate, in which manner four of the villagers bore her on their shoulders to the doctor's house. While their patient had sense and breathed, they thought there was hope, and they earnestly prayed that the healing art might be able to restore her; great, however, was their disappointment when they were informed that the doctor was out, and no one was to be found nearer than at a distance of several miles on the other side of the mountain. In this dilemma they flew in several directions to seek the good physician, and honest Francis. The latter had been out that day on a little excursion with the doctor, who had taken him botanizing on one of the adjacent hills. They had spent a pleasant afternoon together, and were returning home together by a circuitous route, when, at the persuasion of Francis, they stopped at a friend's house a little out of the road to regale and rest themselves, as it was his wedding-day. Here they sat inhaling the sweetness of the evening breeze for a time, but a something came over the mind of Francis, which made him wish to reach home.

He had not been out for an afternoon without his wife for many months, and he always left her and his little family with regret. "Ah!" said he, "I wish I were at home; if any thing should have happened during my absence, and nobody be present to take care of my wife, as I have left her without giving her any notice, how miserable should I be."

The doctor laughed at his fears, and bid him not give way to the anticipation of misfortune; but nothing could recover the hilarity of the honest peasant.—When they had advanced a little round the mountain, and were descending, Francis came in sight of the spot where he had been accustomed to stop and view his little cottage with delight; like the miser and his casket, he doated upon the treasure his hut contained, and, better than the miser's gold, he knew the treasure under his roof doated on him, and was waiting to make his return welcome.

He thought his eyes were dizzy—he tottered and reclined on the good doctor's arm, as he pointed to the ruins under which his little house and garden seemed burried. The doctor saw in a moment that the overhanging crag had given way,

and, as he could only confirm the dreadful apprehension of his companions misfortune, he endeavoured to console him with reflections on the duty of submission to the Divine will, and the happy recollection that all his children were, no doubt, at school, and his eldest one visiting at his house, and probably his wife would have timely notice of the ruin to escape it.

Francis listened, and said nothing, while the doctor drew him from the spot, and they proceeded father onwards.—At the foot of the mountain they were met by some of the persons in search of them, who came suddenly forward, and at the same time they seemed in the greatest hurry to speak, they looked at each other with tears in their eyes, and with countenance that seemed to say—How can we tell the shocking accident, and let Francis be by and hear it? Some of them kindly therefore kept the latter in conversation while the others told the doctor the reason of their coming to seek him, and the state of the mangled body. The doctor had, at many paces distance, guessed for what purpose they were hurrying to him, and he had kindly motioned them not to appear to agitated,

nor to speak to Francis on the subject of their visit.

Francis eagerly demanded if any accident had happened, but they all assured him, that, except a little earth having damaged a corner of his cottage, nothing was the matter.—“God be praised!” said Francis clasping his hands; “If it be no worse, than this, I submit, and adore the hand that gives the blow.” They conversed till they came to the angle of a wall that surrounded the church-yard, and which led to the bottom of the vale, where, till that afternoon had stood his abode of humility and happiness.

“Has my wife escaped, is she hurt? you don’t answer me! speak! where is she?” These were the words he was uttering to each, when, at the turn of the wall, they met the mournful bearers of his pale wife, slowly proceeding to the minister’s house, whom, it was the desire of the people, should pray by her, and smoothen her soul’s passage into the other world by his pious prayers and sacred functions. He saw her hand hang lifeless over the side of the bed, he uncovered the visage on which he had so often gazed with delight,

and sank down as if deprived of life on the spot.

In his fall, he cut himself against a sharp flint, and the wound bleeding profusely as he lay like an inanimate corpse beside the wife of his bosom, whom the men had deposited on the ground, he seemed to require the doctor's first care and attention, that he might restore him for the sake of his little ones ; but how was the scene heightened when he came, and saw those standing around him, and endeavouring to call him back to life, by their weeping anxieties, and artless entreaties not to die and leave them without either father or mother. 'They had wisely before his recovery removed the body from him, but his grief and anxiety were not allayed by the entreaties of the doctor, nor the pressure of his children. Like a man forlorn, he said he would be buried in the same grave with her, and watch her turf till the mountains should also cover him, and the flowers should cease to blow round it. While the body proceeded to the minister's, where it would be more convenient for interment, Francis was conducted to the doctor's, and seemed recovered sufficiently to converse upon the accident, the unprovided

state of his young family, and the spot on the mountain where his wife had often said she should like to be buried. Unfortunately, however, some one more talkative than prudent, told him of the anxious manner in which his wife had called upon his name, lamenting that he had gone out that afternoon against her will, and that she must die without seeing him. This was too much for the tender soul of Francis to bear—he conceived an aversion to the good doctor, as the guilty person who had brought upon him all the misfortune which had ensued, and that he was the author of his wife's death, because he had opposed her going out with him. It was in vain to reason with him; the idea had laid fast hold of his mind, and nothing could induce him to stay with the good man, but the assurance she should be buried on the slope of a part of the mountain, where a patch of rich grass grew, embossed with some of the richest mountain wild flowers, shadowed by some overhanging yews. As his mind seemed to harp much upon this, to soothe him, they did not contradict him in a thought, the execution of which was almost impossible from the declivity. At night, therefore, he was

suffered to retire to rest with his two youngest daughters, who, overcome with crying and fatigue, soon dropped into the soundest sleep; which he no sooner saw than he descended from the window, and in the dark climbed the garden-wall, and advanced up the side of the mountain. On the following morning, nothing could equal the good physician's consternation when he was told of the escape of his poor friend. He could not tell where to seek him,—and after many a fruitless search on the following day, he was discovered on the declivity before mentioned, digging up the ground with an exertion and earnestness that showed he had some object of deep interest in view. He stood on a spot of inconceivable danger, and where the smallest false step might precipitate him down a declivity of great depth. In this dilemma they did not know what method to pursue: to force him from the spot might occasion his death, and the doctor was of opinion, that his children would have the greatest effect by their presenting themselves to his view at the nearest distance, and beckoning to him to follow them. It was an interesting sight to see the tender innocents climbing the rude places to

bring back to their little arms a father who was threatened with the worst of all possible human calamities—the loss of reason.

Ann placed herself at their head, as the eldest, and sometimes she assisted the weaker to climb, and sometimes they walked two by two, and then singly, as the path-way was more or less broad. When they were near enough they called to him, and asked him what he was doing. He saw and knew them, and replied, that he was digging a house for Julia, their mother, that would never fall in any more, and would last them all their lives. The children were very much frightened to hear their father talk in this manner, and would have gone away, but Ann said, “Let us stay and see if he will but come from that dangerous spot; he will be, perhaps, persuaded, if we can but follow him,—he will not harm us, and who knows but when he finds that he is deceived, and that our poor mother is dead, and buried in her grave, but he may listen to us, and love us; and let us live with him as we have done all our lives before.” This was assented to by all the sisters, and when they found their father had climbed up the declivi-

ty, they also made towards the same spot with the intention to follow him. He did not take the road that led to the bottom of the mountain, but directed his way into the labyrinths and windings which led towards its summit; but where could that summit be said to end, since one ascent only conducted to another, and thick trees, huge fragments, great chasms, and deep water-falls, broke up the evenness of the ground, and made every step a labour to our young travellers. Their feet became wounded, their hands were torn with the briers, their clothing rent to tatters, and their swiftest run was unequal to keep up with the hurried pace of their father. In vain did they call to him to stop; he only turned back to look at them, with a motion not to follow him, and then went on swifter than before. In this manner they followed him more than two hours, till at last they could only see him, occasionally, climbing the projecting eminences at a considerable distance, and his size was so much diminished, that he did not appear larger than one of the wild birds that flits from rock to rock.

Twilight too had set in, the youngest sisters began to complain that they could

go no further, and they were hungry and sleepy. Their father had now become totally out of sight; lost to them, to himself, and to every other consideration but that of going to meet his wife in heaven, and bringing her back in the form of an angel to live in his new house. With his disappearance died every hope in the bosoms of the twelve sisters, who could not but be sensible, that, in endeavouring to pursue their beloved father, they had lost their way back through the mountains, for it had not struck them, as it had done Tommy Thumb, of famous memory, to leave any marks by which they might trace their way through such a labyrinth of trees, and hills, and pits. Night began to advance with her dark wings, and the moon had arisen before they had determined what to do. The shadows of the high trees alarmed them, for they looked like so many black giants stalking along on the flat sides of the cliffs, as they were waved by the wind, and the calls of the night birds mingled, with the roaring of the prowling wolves, terrified them almost to death. At a distance they every now and then fancied they saw their fiery eye-balls, and the

tread of the wolf, which had so alarmed them before, sounded here and there as if making its way through the bushes, now they had no father, no mother, to frighten it away. They were now almost in a state of despair, and they began to cry most lamentably, the less ones clinging round the bigger, and entreating them, when they spoke of going farther, not to leave them. Every step of ground was become insecure; they tottered, and often two or three fell over each other, and sometimes it seemed as if they were pulled behind by their clothes, the briars and bushes laid so fast hold of their wollen garments. Even Caroline, the boldest of them, began to lose courage, and mingle her tears with her sister's, and their despair had just broken out into loud sobs, when a clanking of chains that echoed all through the mountains, sounded, and something of a prodigious massy weight was heard to fall with a great shock. One might see them clasp each other with terror and surprise; for it seemed at no great distance from them: but little Sophy gave a leap for joy, and said, "In our solitude we are not yet abandoned—God, who made this darkness of the forest,

will find us a way to get out of it if we do but trust in him." "Yes," said Ann, "it is the darkness of our minds that makes us distrust. We have now lost both a mother and father, but how often have we read, that, if we be forsaken, God Almighty will be both to us."—"Come," said Mary, "let us make our way towards that noise—a sound cannot hurt us, and who knows but it is some signal to direct lost wanderers in their way. I think I see a light glimmering through a window, on high, there, to the right—ah! now it is gone." Their little necks were extended to see it, but now Rosa became terrified lest it should be Cruel Castle, of which travellers spoke so much, and which was inhabited by a frightful old frump, called Lady Dreadful. This very idea struck a terror into all, and, proceeding slowly, they came near to the ruined turrets of a building, to which they hastened with all the speed they were able. When they came closer, they saw over what appeared to be the great entrance, these words in transparent characters: "*This is Cruel Castle. Let the good and the unfortunate enter!—The wicked shall be punished!*"—A large moat encircled the

building, and the drawbridge was down, the letting of which fall had so much alarmed them. The conditions on which they were to enter made them start, but they were encouraged by Caroline, who said, "That they were indeed unfortunate, that they had always been obedient to their parents, and that, finally, if the castle did belong to Lady Dreadful, she would not think they had done wrong in taking refuge in her castle, when they were lost in seeking after a poor wandering father. Perhaps (she suggested) we may hear something of him, and will not that repay us for all the alarms we may encounter?" Patty, who was the most timid, urged several reasons against going in, but the danger of remaining in the dark unsheltered forest was equally alarming, and, therefore, Caroline led the way over the drawbridge. No sooner were they on the other side than the drawbridge fell with a terrible velocity and crash, and their hearts sank within them. After a little while, they took courage, and began to survey the walls and ruins of the old pile they were approaching. Semi-arches, grated with iron, showed underground abodes, and in two or three

places a glimmering lamp, hung by chains, waved backwards and forwards, and threw a light upon a descent of steps that led to yet deeper vaults. They looked, and listened, and groans seemed to issue along the winding passages, till the doors, grating upon their hinges, stifled the sound. "Aye, this is certainly the old dame's castle!" said Martha. "Oh that I were over the draw-bridge again!"—and indeed so all said; but they had not time to say many words more, on account of the approach of Lady dreadful herself, who came tottering on two sticks, in an old tattered black robe, and round her waist hung pincers, thumb-screws, gags, and whips of wire. Her hideous face was shaded partly by a cap that encircled it, and rose on the forehead to a picked point. They would have run away, more alarmed now than they were at the forest, the darkness, and the wolf, but it was too late. She beckoned to them to follow her, which they did, so closely, that they might have been all put into the compass of a boy's hoop.

Lady Dreadful led them into a small room, and demanded the cause of their intruding into her castle. Ann, as the

eldest, stated all the circumstances as they have before been told, and the rest of the sisters said it was indeed true. "Well," said Lady Dreadful, "go you all into the kitchen, where that servant leads you, and he will show you to your beds in the Green chamber; do not be alarmed at any noise in the night, for here the good have nothing to fear." Here Lady Dreadful motioned to kiss them, but her frightful beard and parrot's nose made them submit with reluctance. They found twelve messes of nice milk and a large slice of cake each, and were afterwards shown to twelve beds all in one room. Nothing disturbed them in the night, and the next morning they rose very much refreshed, and after breakfast Lady Dreadful conducted them to the Black Room, where a number of children and even grown persons were chained to large iron pillars, and obliged to move great weights, or be goaded by long iron forks which came down from the ceiling and run into them. "They are detained here," said Lady Dreadful, "for their good; they were brought here without their knowledge, and they will be taken away in the same manner the moment they

show signs of amendment. But, let us turn, my dear children, from the punishments attendant on the bad, and enter the White Room, where persons of a different description are employed. They then crossed over the castle, and came into a beautiful saloon, ornamented with paintings, tapestry, and artificial flowers. Here were instruments of music and of amusement, and books and drawing implements.

About twelve persons, three or four of them children, advanced, as soon as Lady Dreadful entered, and saluted her, and then taking each of them by the hand welcomed them to Cruel Castle.—“These,” said Lady Dreadful, “are some of my favourites, good by nature, or made so by their good sense. Be you like them, and this shall be your asylum after you have passed one year in the world in search of your father, and in providing for yourselves. Therefore to-morrow, being the first day of the year, you shall quit this castle, and you shall all promise to meet each other on that day twelvemonth, as Little Jack, of famous memory, did his eleven brothers, when they were forced to leave their parents on account of their poverty.

I shall know if the narrative you then give me be true or false, and shall exact a solemn promise that you will be good, in which case I will be a mother to you all."

Ann thanked her in the name of all the sisters, and having spent the day in the charming society of these young favourites, they retired to rest on the last evening of the year, and prayed that God would strengthen them for the task they had to undergo.

In the morning they breakfasted with Lady Dreadful, whose face they no longer began to think ugly, who having given them her best instruction for their future conduct, and to each a dollar, they were conducted by a servant to a part of the domains of the castle where twelve roads met. Here they had a parting feast of pudding and ale, and as the clock struck twelve, after tenderly taking leave of each other, they separated to pursue their fortunes.

THE
HISTORY OF
ANN.

ANN, having taken an affectionate leave of her eleven sisters, and kissed them all round, set off with a sorrowful heart. She enquired at every house and of every one she passed, if such a person as her father had been on that road. At length, some boys informed her, that they had met a poor man about two miles off in a cross path, who appeared, from the wild manner in which he accosted them, to be out of his mind. Ann did not hesitate a moment, notwithstanding evening was advancing, to take the direction pointed out by these wicked boys, who, no sooner saw her out of hearing, than they began to laugh at the jest they had played upon her, and enjoyed particularly the difficulty she would have to find her way back.

Hope, however, supported the spirits

of Ann, nor did they begin to droop till she had traversed more than four miles in a cross unbeaten path, and found herself at last completely bewildered. "In seeking my dear father," said she, "I have lost myself, but surely he's a prize that will well repay my labour; besides, after all, I am only doing my duty, which he has always more than done by me." She was reasoning thus when she cast her eyes towards a cottage that appeared by a light burning in the window, to be at a considerable distance. It was getting late; night had gently stolen on, and involved every object in darkness, except the tops of the tall trees.

She sat down to rest on a fallen oak, when footsteps and voices attracted her attention. Two men came up, and pitched two heavy trunks upon the tree where Ann was just seated, and drawing out a tinder box, they struck a light, and began to examine the contents of the chest. Ann had softly crept behind a bush at a small distance, trembling with apprehension, so true it is that what we often think our greatest safety proves our certain danger.

"If any one should be near," said one of the men. "Why then we will mur-

der him," said the other, drawing out a large pistol, which he laid down beside him. "Did you kill the postillion, Tom?" said one. "Yes," said Tom, "and left the old gentleman bound hand and foot, calling out for mercy, begging we would leave him a pair of bracelets of his daughter's, made with her hair, and her watch, in which was her likeness, and we might take all the rest; but I soon silenced him with a blow of my sabre, and so all was quiet." "If Bertha don't come with the key soon we shan't get into the cottage," said Jack; "I can't think what detains her, as she was to have met us here. Come, let us see what we have got."

They then cut the cords of the trunks, took out a quantity of wearing apparel, and among the rest the watch and bracelets which the old gentleman had so highly prized. "Ay, ay, these will do for Bertha," said Jack, "and if she does but keep a sharp look out and bring us news of travellers passing on the skirts of the mountain, she shan't want for fine things. We have got a pretty good booty; here is fifty guineas in a purse, besides trinkets. Ah, where does this Bertha stay! I hope she has not betrayed us."

The whizzing flight of an owl from the bush where Ann stood now interrupted the robbers; they caught hold of their pistols and pointed them so directly at the spot where she stood that she gave a shriek of terror, and fell senseless to the ground. The robbers flew to the spot, seized poor Ann by the hair, and were actually disputing whether they should shoot her and strip her, when the footsteps of Bertha were heard, who gave notice of her approach by a small whistle. At the moment they had applied their pistols to the temples of poor Ann, she came up, and whispered them that there was no time to be lost. Their dark lanterns were hid under their coats, and without the least noise, they marched away. "No, no," said Jack, "we'll not dispatch her now, let us see first if she has been set to watch us, and if not we will let her live. As for the booty, let that be till to-morrow, we can come and fetch it when all danger is over."

Thus they carried Ann away with them half dead with fear; and fearful that before the next morning she might be destroyed; therefore, when they got to the cottage she sat down in deep despair, and upon their questioning her as

to the cause of her being where they found her, she told them her artless tale in the most impressive manner, hoping they would not injure a poor young woman who had eleven younger sisters unprovided for, and who, like her, were seeking a poor distracted father." Such was the power of simplicity, added to beauty, for Ann had all the loveliness and bloom of her mother when at her age, that the younger of the two robbers was softened by her distress, and interceded with his companion not to kill her, but to let her live as their servant. This the other growlingly consented to, at the same time swearing, that they both, perhaps, should live to rue it.

Ann was that night put to bed with Bertha, who felt her jealousy so much excited by the interest that Jack had taken in her preservation, that she determined to have no rivals, but rather to sacrifice either them or her. In this manner did poor Ann remain months without an opportunity of escape, as she was never left alone, and either Bertha or Tom staid with her. Left one day with Bertha, she formed the resolution of escaping, at all hazards, and seeing Bertha enter the large closet, she boldly

turned the key on her, and flew up stairs to her chamber, and took from a small box the bracelets of hair and the watch which had been presented to Bertha as a reward by the robbers. She also took down one of the pistols, which was generally kept loaded, and, concealing it in her handkerchief, she made her way out of the house; but soon she was overtaken by Bertha, who had come into the room by a secret door, upon finding herself fastened in, and was opposed by this fury, who, with dreadful imprecations, drawing a long knife ordered her to return to the cottage, but this Ann resisted; finding she was about to seize her, as a last resource, Ann courageously presented the pistol, and threatened her with instant death, if she was interrupted. Alas ! Bertha only laughed at her threats; the pistol was not loaded with ball, and Ann would certainly have fallen again into the horrible captivity, if the appearance of a young man on a mule, who came to enquire whither that road led, had not prevented all farther alarm; for Ann immediately threw herself upon his protection, and begged that, for God's sake, he would see her to some place of security. This the horseman

generously undertook to do, and leaving Bertha bound to a tree, they went several miles through defiles and difficult ascents, till they came to a small inn, where travellers and tradesmen, in that part of the country, often met. The horseman and Ann wanted each a bed to sleep there that night, but the landlord said, that was impossible, as two gentlemen above stairs wished to sleep there that evening, who always paid well, and must not, therefore, be disappointed.—“Well,” said the horsman, “if they be kind gentlemen, they will accommodate this young woman, who has been cruelly treated and detained by a gang of robbers at a distance in the forest, and, but for my fortunately passing that way, might have lost either her life or her liberty by their severity. But go, landlord, and tell them, that they would much oblige me and a charming young female, if they will spare her one bed, and I will sit up.” The landlord went out, but soon returned with a negative message.—“Come,” said the horseman, “let us, Ann, (for by this time he learned her name,) wait upon these unkind gentlemen; your looks may have more interest than all my pleadings; I am sure

were I in their case, to gratify you would be my greatest pleasure • a kindness is always repaid in some way or other, and often when we least think of it.”

Persuaded by the stranger's manner, Ann mounted up stairs, and was introduced into the room where the gentlemen were sitting. She started back, and clinging fast hold of her conductor, exclaimed, “ Oh save me ! save me ! ” and had nearly sunk into his arms.—He was amazed, and before she could explain the cause of her terror, they had withdrawn to the stable, had mounted their horses, and were gone. It will be readily conceived, that Ann had real ground for her alarm, when it is known, that these two gentlemen were no others than Jack and Tom, who had come there on an expedition of observation, and knew their fair prisoner as soon as she entered the room. They were apprehensive of being made captives in their turn, and experiencing that fate which they deserved, and, therefore, they immediately abandoned the cottage, and betook themselves to another part of the country.

When Ann had made the cause of her alarm known, the generous horseman would have pursued, but darkness pre-

vented this dangerous measure, and Ann retired to rest in the very bed intended for these maurauders, and recommending herself to the protection of her heavenly Parent, she lay down, full of thankfulness for the mercies she had received in the friend she had met with.

Ann enjoyed that sweet sleep which innocence and good health ever bring, and when she came down in the morning, looked as fresh and lovely as the beautiful rose after a morning shower. The young horseman had now taken off his hat, and, as they sat at breakfast, Ann regarded him with strong marks of recollection. "Surely," said she, "I recollect your features!—That scar on your forehead is familiar to me." "Yes," said the young horseman, "I obtained that in a fall from my horse, about two years ago. Do you know the road that winds under the mountain, by Thorn-hedge-cliff, many miles distant from here?" "I know it well," replied Ann. "There," continued the young man, "lived an honest countryman, of the name of Francis Furrow;—passing near there one day, my horse took fright, I was thrown, and received a dangerous wound in my forehead, which re-

quired the assistance of a surgeon. His eldest daughter, during my stay, was my nurse, and her tenderness will never be erased from my memory. Poor Francis, he had a large family to struggle with; and I was not rich, so that I have never had it yet in my power to repay him for his civility. Ah, that little engaging daughter, she had so many kind ways, that she was beloved equally by her parents, her eleven sisters, and by me. Her artless questions to know if she had made me better, and whether I would come and attend her, if she became ill, made me regret that she was not richer, or I poorer. Never shall I forget to that day when I took my leave, to proceed on my journey, and she accompanied me to the top of the hill, which commanded a view for some distance of the land below. Take this, said she, it is a little gift, but I would part with it to no one in whom I did not feel an interest. I have done much to relieve the wound in your head—the wound in my heart is too deep to be relieved, unless you come again. Poor thing, I took her gift, put it in my bosom, and she shed tears on my hand as I pressed hers; and as often I turned round, to give her a

nod of tender remembrance, I found her handkerchief waving. I then bethought me to look at her gift, which I had promised to keep for her sake, and found it was a lock of hair. I have transformed it into this broche, and placed it near my heart, to which she will be ever dear."

"Is your name Alfred Wamlin?" said Ann, with a look that brightened into extacy. "It is," said the youth. "And mine is Ann Furrow, that Ann who attended you with so much pleasure, and parted with you with so much regret!" This was a moment of unexpected joy to the young folks—a moment of pure delight. Their mutual love and mutual benefits were equally balanced on each side, and each thought the other deserved the utmost extent of affection. It was now with delight that Ann verified the good old proverb, that '*a friend in need, is a friend in deed*;' but then this was a young friend too, not more than two years older than herself, and she had not yet entered her 18th year.

All that morning they spent in wandering through the romantic walks of mountain Ash, and looking upon each other with looks that spoke more than words. Alfred listened with remarkable

feeling to the adventures of Ann, and was moved by the unfortunate condition of her father. He informed her that since he had last parted with her he had entered into the army, and was now on a journey to the father of his general's wife, on whom the old gentleman doated as an only daughter, and who would possess all his property.

The young lovers slept that night at the inn; and the next day, as they journeyed on, Alfred proposed to leave Ann at his mother's for a time, till he proceeded to the general's, and after he should return, to stay a day or two with her, and then join his regiment, till the time that Ann was to meet her sisters at Cruel Castle.

Ann was now scarcely angry with the robbers, since this event had been the means of introducing her to the affection and love of Alfred.

Light hearts always make short journeys, and there was nothing to oppress that of Ann but the forlorn insanity of her father, and the unprovided condition of her sisters: for whom she put up her constant prayers to Him who has said he will be a father to the fatherless, and shut not his ears to the cries of the needy.

At length they arrived at Mrs. Wamlin's, who received her for Alfred's sake with the utmost kindness ; and when he had related the story of Ann, and the obligations he lay under to her father, she was invited to stay as long as she thought proper. This was a welcome intelligence to Ann, as she knew that her lover, for such we may call Alfred, would make every inquiry respecting her father. Alfred staid but one day with his mother, and then continued the remainder of his journey to the old general, whom they found nearly at the point of death, occasioned by a deep sabre wound he had received some months before, as he was travelling over the mountains towards his country seat. Alfred delivered the message he bore from his daughter, and received some packets in return, stating his declining health, and the losses he had received by the robbers. The worthy old gentleman detained Alfred but a few days, and then he returned to his mother's of whom and his beloved Ann he took leave for a short time.

Ann made it her chief study to deserve Mrs. Wamlin's favour and encouragement, and succeeded so far, by indulging her in her inclinations, providing for her

little wants, and alleviating her complaints, that she became quite a favourite ; nor was Ann idle all this time ; she profited by the conversation of those who came to visit the old lady, and improved herself by all those advantages which judicious reading and neatness of dress afford. One day the old lady would pay a visit to the general, to inquire after his health, and to present her young visitor, whose qualifications and engaging manners she did not esteem lightly. She desired Ann to decorate herself in her best apparel, adding, good naturedly, “ Perhaps, lass, you may attract the notice of some rich young gentleman, and thus may become a great lady. “ I have no ambition of that kind,” replied Ann ; “ to be happy is my desire ; to be esteemed by you and to be loved by Alfred is all the wealth I covet for myself. For my father and sisters I should require something more ; but, if Providence make them but good, they will be sure to find friends among the benevolent.”

They eased the length of the journey by resting two nights at the houses of friends, where Ann charmed every one by her affable behaviour ; and at one

gentleman's actually had an appointment to superintend the amusement of three young ladies, as long as she chose to stay previous to the day on which she was to meet her eleven sisters.

When they were arrived at the old general's, and were introduced, Ann had on those bracelets and wore that portrait of which we have spoken before. As she drew near the general, he started with surprise, and, begging to look at the miniature in the watch, he exclaimed, "It is that of my daughter!" This led to an explanation of the singular way in which it had come into Ann's possession, as well as the bracelets. It was evident that Ann had lived with the villains who had so nearly murdered him, and from her he learned such an accurate description of their persons that he caused them to be advertised every where. "But," said he, "this present, which I never expected to recover, and which has cost you so dear, must not go unrewarded. I will give you in return that gift which I should have consigned to my daughter had she lived,—the right to that estate I had purchased for her, and a dowry to whomsoever you may marry." "Not for myself," said Ann, "do I require

such unmerited kindness. It is true, I procured these things for the right owner, should fate ever throw me in his way, and I feel sufficient reward in having rendered you, sir, a service. If you would bestow a reward on him who saved me——” “Who is that?” demanded the old gentleman. “On this lady’s son, on Alfred Wamlin.” “He shall be made an officer, and your reward be two hundred pounds. I always took an interest in his welfare, and I hope he does in your’s.” Ann held down her head, and the old gentleman called to the servant to open a drawer: “This purse,” said he, “is to balance the value of the miniature and bracelet; this is for your own sake, and this for Alfred’s, and I deposit these in his mother’s hand.” Ann knelt and thanked him. “In that drawer is a commission—you shall present it to him with your own hand, and my servant shall escort you. Such should be ever the reward of goodness.” Ann retired with a heart as light as air; she could now do something for her younger sisters, if they should not, when they met, have been able to do any thing for themselves; and she calculated that the time occupied in staying with

the old general, which was to be two months, and the return to Mrs. Wamlin's, and her after-journey to Alfred, would nearly complete the time to the appointed day when the meeting with her sisters was to take place, at which they had, under a solemn assurance, promised to be punctual.

Two months soon flew away while at the general's, during which time Ann yet farther gained the esteem of all the inmates; and then she departed in the general's chariot home, with an escort of servants, and dressed in some of that elegant apparel which had belonged to the general's daughter. Having stopped to refresh a few days at Mrs. Wamlin's, they both continued their journey to the spot where Alfred's regiment lay, elated with the delight which awaited him when he should read the document of which they were the bearers. Nothing intervened worthy of notice till their journey was completed, when they presented themselves to his astonished view as he stood in the front of the line. But what was his surprise when the colonel called him out, and read the appointment under the general's signature, and then addressing him, said, "These :a-

dies are the hasty bearers of your merited good fortune,—your mother and this beautiful young lady!" Alfred sprang to them, and embraced them ardently. His eyes swam in tears of delight, and Ann shared in all his emotions. They adjourned, by the colonel's permission, from the gaze of the soldiers, and indulged in mutual congratulations at the apartments of Alfred. After a fortnight had elapsed, one day, in walking with Alfred, Ann observed two soldiers drinking at a public house door, whom she recognized to be the two men who had confined her in the hovel, and had so cruelly treated the old general, whose death was prevented by the timely interference of some riders passing that way. The postillion however was killed; and now for this murder these men, who had so long escaped, were convicted on Ann's evidence; but Jack was sent to the galleys for life, as he had shown mercy to Ann, and Tom was executed. Ann returned with the old lady, and remained either with her or the old general till the time of meeting her sisters took place, before which, however, the grateful Alfred visited the general, and solicited his benediction when the time

should arrive for him to unite his fate with that of his beloved Ann, after the meeting with her sisters, for which purpose we shall now suppose her on the journey.

~~~~~

THE  
HISTORY OF  
MARY.

==

MARY set out with a light heart, for the thought of having some money in her pocket gave new wings to her feet. While thinking of the reward Lady Dreadful had promised her, if she increased it by fair and honourable means, and the punishment to be inflicted if she acted contrary to the orders enjoined her, she had made up to the box of a poor man who was carrying cakes and gingerbread. Finding herself hungry, she purchased a small quantity, and asked him if he could inform her of any kind gentlefolk where they would give a young woman,



in search of her father, a night's lodging. The old man told her of two or three, but advised her, by all means, to go to the Silver House with the gold dome, at some miles distance, (the top of which might be seen on yonder hill) if she could keep silence, and suffer nothing to induce her to speak. The value of silence Mary had often read of, and she determined now to try its effects. She came up to the outer gate and knocked, when a porter came out, and pointing to the motto over the door, "*Be silent, if you would enter!*" he demanded what she wanted. Mary was detailing a long account of her situation, when the porter shut to the gate, and left her ready to cry with disappointment and vexation. As she walked to the other side of the silver house, she saw another gate, and, recollecting that perhaps her error in talking too much had caused the porter to be so rude, she determined to mind the caution. Having knocked at the door it was opened, and she saw the same words written over this gate, "*Be silent, if you would enter!*" Mary there fore motioned with her hand that she wanted to sleep there, when she was suffered to pass. A young girl and boy wel-



comed her in, and began to talk very familiarly with her, but Mary replied not a word. This house was not made of silver, but obtained that name from every thing being white within it; and so nice was it, that Mary regarded herself as a disgrace to every thing around her. The master of the house very soon came, with a long white beard, and dressed in a white robe, with a white wand. He motioned to Mary to follow him, and they came into a hall filled with statues, the lips of which were all closed, with their eyes cast down on the ground, or lifted up in reverence towards heaven; while others, old as well as young, had their mouths wide open, apparently talking, and looked quite ridiculous; with fools' caps on their heads, rattles in their hands, and magpies on their shoulders.

The old gentleman next put a book in her hand, whence she learnt these were ridiculous and empty persons, who had been dismissed when they called there, and who talked always either without thinking what they were going to say, or to no purpose. Mary looked up in silence, and wrote on the leaf of the book that she would not do so, upon which the old gentleman kissed her, and said, that

“the rule of the house was so far dispensed with, that young folks might whisper if they had observed silence during one hour after entering, and had answered no questions.” Mary, therefore, now told her story, and was promised assistance and permission to stay as long as she pleased, if she observed the rule of the house, never to talk out but when alone; never to talk to another but in a mild voice, and to be silent when older persons were present. A servant now came in and motioned to Mary with a knife and fork to come to supper; and pointed to the clock to show it was time to go to bed. Mary obeyed; bowed to old Mr. Peaceful, and squeezing his hand, with a kind look withdrew to a neat little chamber, in which was a fine tall statue, the very resemblance of the old gentleman she had just quitted.—Before getting into bed she said her prayers, and asked her heavenly Father to direct her to her earthly one, for she might now talk as she was alone, and then she lay down to sleep. Over the bed was written, “*Observe, but be silent.*” About midnight she was awaked by something that came to the bedside, and felt about her clothing, and then retired; but

she did not call out, as it did not put a finger on her, but only whispered, "poor girl!" Shortly after it disappeared, and Mary went to sleep till morning, when she missed her old heavy shoes and coarse stockings, and found a beautiful pair of each in their stead. She got up much delighted, and came down stairs, where Mr. Peaceful was seated with some friends; but Mary could say nothing, as they were not alone.

Mary would have spoken of these things, but recollecting silence was so strictly enjoined, she determined to say nothing, and observe the more. In the day time she was permitted to amuse herself with books, or walk in the garden, behind the wall of which she heard so much gabbling and prating, that she was at a loss to guess the meaning of it in so silent a mansion as Silver Hall. This day passed away, and she retired to rest as before. In the night the same figure came gently in, advances to the bed, and said, "Good things are for good girls," and then took away some part of her clothing, with which the figure retired. Mary was less alarmed than the night before, as no harm, it appeared, was intended her. In the morning, she found

instead of her own tattered frock, a good one of the nicest texture. In this manner, during a fortnight, she always found some article of her dress changed; and as it was always for the better, she had a very strong inducement to comply with the customs of Silver Hall. One night, the figure took her old bonnet, and in its place left a hat, with a handsome feather in it, and a cornelian cross in the front. Mary regularly made her appearance in these things at breakfast, and the old gentleman seemed much pleased; but nothing was said, and thus passed on a month nearly, till one night, when a beautiful figure came in, and advancing to the bed side, said in a whisper, "To-morrow you must resume your search after your father, as love of our parents is a first duty; for no good daughter can be happy while her parents are miserable. I have something now to leave you, and to-morrow you must request to be admitted a member of the Thoughtful Society, and act with caution. Silver Hall is established to teach young persons and prating people, that such talking shows want of thought, and in children is both rude and intolerable. The gabblers you heard within the high wall,

are shut up there for punishment, and must either correct their fault, or be dismissed after one month's trial."

It is impossible to describe what serenity and stillness reigned in Silver-hall. Chairs were never flapped down, the doors banged to, or the bells pulled hard. When any thing was wanted, there was no occasion to call twice, because every one knew his duty; and all moved lightly, treading on mats and carpets of the softest texture.

At length came the following morning, when it was notified in writing by Mary, that she wished to be admitted a member of the Thoughtful Society, though the number was full, which had never exceeded ten, besides the president. The members being all seated in the white room, Mary was ushered in, when the president pointed to a large vase of glass, filled with water to the brim, signifying the number of the society was full, and she could not be admitted. Mary bowed, and taking a leaf from the rose in her bosom, she laid it lightly on the top of the water, by which means it did not run over; meaning to show that something might be added to the vase without its being too full. The president

admired very much the conduct of Mary, and then handed the book to her to inscribe her name, which she did in the smallest writing, to show she was the least deserving of notice. The president then pointed to the number 10, for Mary to add her figure to it, which was to make eleven members in the society; but she, to their surprise and delight, placed only a figure of 0 before the 10, to signify that she had not at all increased the value of the society; which, when the president saw, he erased it, and placed a figure of 0 on the other side, which made the number stand 100; by which it is evident he meant to say, that she had increased the value of the society ten fold. He then embraced her, and the meeting broke up highly delighted with the silent conduct and ingenuity of the new member.

Mary had so much gained the good will of the master of Silver Hall, that he asked her to stay the rest of the month; but Mary replied, that her duty required her to be on the search after her father and to endeavour to improve the token she had received from Lady Dreadful before her return. "Ah! (said the old gentleman,) I have a son, at present on



his studies, who I am sure would be much pleased with your conduct and sentiments. Good daughters are most likely to make good wives; but he has yet never thought of these things. If you will go into that side chamber, you will see a portrait of him." Mary did so, and was struck with the sweetness of his countenance and the manliness of his figure: he appeared to be about twenty. Mary passed the rest of the day in this room, and could not keep out of it; but whether the picture was the cause of her preference is not allowed us to say.

Mary went to rest before, and felt so pleased with her treatment, and happy in herself, and she slept soundly all night; but what was her surprise on taking out her money next morning, which overnight was only twelve pence, to find twelve *Louis d'ors* in a purse, with twelve strings to tie it. She dressed herself in haste, and running into the breakfast room, knelt down at the foot of Mr. Peaceful, and presented it to him, whispering that it was not her property; but the old gentleman pressed it upon her, and giving her a casket, told her it could never be opened so long as she continued virtuous, by any one but the youth who

would be her future husband. Mary put it in her bosom, took her leave with tears, and was conducted in silence to the outer gate; but it will be easily believed, that having now good clothes, and delicate shoes, she was not in so fit a state to walk as before; this Mr. Peaceful having foreseen, as well as the reader, he ordered, therefore, a beautiful little mule, with a handsome saddle and furniture, to be in waiting at the gate for Mary, which she mounted, and rode off like a lady.

Mary's appearance readily made her friends every where, and great respect was shown her, now she seemed to want no one's assistance. She visited all the cottages and houses where she could gain intelligence, and thus a fortnight of the time passed away without hearing any thing of her poor father. Whenever she went among the abodes of the poor, and observed poverty and industry, she gave some part of the money she had so generously received, to relieve their wants; and, indeed, she could have taken no better method to have made herself beloved at Silver Hall, to which place her name was carried with great expressions of esteem by several of the poor persons

she had occasionally relieved in her way, and which much pleased Mr. Peaceful, the kind owner of the mansion. We must, however, here say that gratitude and virtue are not always the portion of the poor, many of them often putting on the mask of necessity, the more easily to make a property of and pillage the unsuspecting. This was now the case of Mary. At the last hovel where she put up, they were dishonest people, or rather robbers; for in the dead of the night they came into Mary's room, and finding she was awake, with dreadful oaths bid her hide her head beneath the clothes, while they took all the handsome clothing, and the steel casket, which she prized more than any thing. Fear for her life kept her silent; they then tied her hands and feet to prevent her following them; and in this frightful state poor Mary lay till the noon of the following day, incapable of making any one hear, or of helping herself. Such changes as these may show how soon the richest may be brought low, and how much we stand in need of each other's help!

In the afternoon a match girl called to ask if any matches were wanted, and

Mary shrieked so piercingly in the voice of distress, that the poor girl heard her, and, coming into the little room where Mary lay, gave her all the assistance in her power. Being now released, the girl lent her a cloak; she tore one of the sheets for an under garment, and finding an old pair of shoes, she ventured out in this forlorn condition with the girl, whose kindness she was sorry she could not reward. After they had taken a little refreshment from the match-girl's basket, which contained little more than hard bread and some chesnuts, Mary expressed her gratitude to God that the thieves had let her escape with me, and they set forward again. "Ah," said Mary, "if you go to Silver Hall, and tell this tale, good Mr. Peaceful there will reward you, when you say that my name is Mary Furrow, and a member of the Silent Society." "Aye," said the girl, "he lives a long way off; but every one knows how good he is; and that he talks little, but does a great deal." In this manner they chatted about Silver Hall, till they were overtaken by a young gentleman in a single-horse chaise, and a servant handsomely mounted behind. Mary, in a most interesting manner, told him of

her misfortune, and begged him to let her ride behind, especially if he were going to Silver Hall. The young gentleman started when he heard that place named, bid her get in, and dismissed the match-girl with a shilling from the kind account Mary gave of her. She was now covered with the young rider's coat, and made as comfortable as could be. After she had told some parts of her story, he said he knew Silver Hall very well, and should go there after he had spent a few days at a friend of his father's where was a young lady, their daughter, who would equip her, he doubted not with some of her garments.

Mary looked with earnest eyes and attracted looks at her protector, and thought she had before seen his features, but could not tell where. As she went on with her story, and came to that part of her riding the mule, till she described the person and dress of the cottager where she had last slept, the young gentleman asked his servant if he did not recollect such people taking a road through a bye lane as they came across the country. The servant noticed both the man and the woman, and he picked up a cross on the road, which Mary in-



stantly knew to be the same she had worn in her hat. It was now immediately proposed that they should go back, as they had seen them at no great distance, and ascertain if they were the actual robbers, which was directly put in execution, and they came up with them at another turn of the forest just as they were coming out of it.—“These are the robbers!” exclaimed Mary; and the gentleman jumping down with his pistols, and the servant riding up with his sword drawn, the robbers made their escape into the wood, leaving every thing behind them, with all Mary’s clothes and the casket. Mary entered the first house she conveniently could, and changed her dress, which so much became her, that the young gentleman was as much attracted by her person as he had before been by her manner. It must be mentioned, that the young gentleman was now going on a matrimonial expedition to his father’s friends, whose daughter was actually on a visit at that time to *his* father’s. His friends were very glad to see him, and also Mary, whose misfortune he in part related. But how much were they astonished to find that the garments Mary wore were exactly like those



of their daughter's ; and, in short, upon inspection, they found they bore her initials ! This threw a suspicion on Mary's story, which compelled her for her own justification to relate all that had passed since her father's insanity. These unkind persons were for turning her out, as an imposter and deceiver, but the young gentleman was less hasty. He asked Mary as she was willing to accompany him to Silver-hall to verify the truth of her statement, which she gladly accepted ; " and further," said Mary, " here is a casket given me by the worthy old gentleman, which I have never been able to open, but which I prize as my dearest treasure." All were now anxious to open this mysterious casket, but all attempted it without success, till the young gentleman examined it, when, applying a key of a magnetic composition to a steel pin in it, the lid flew up, and presented a most beautiful miniature likeness of Mary, underneath which was written, "*She is an ornament to Silver-hall, and worthy the hand of Henry Peaceful.*" The young gentleman started, he was indeed himself *Henry Peaceful* !—He knew the hand-writing of his father, and he embraced Mary as the

actual fair one whom his good father meant. At the bottom of the casket was a likeness of Henry, similar, only smaller to that she had so earnestly regarded at Silver-hall. "This," said Mary, "I must claim as my own, and I hope I shall be always worthy of retaining it."

It is needless to paint the disappointment of the severe old folks, who determined immediately to send for their daughter from Silver-hall, when they saw the attachment that was increasing between Henry and Mary. Before they quitted this house, Alice, their daughter, came home, dressed in the coarse apparel which Mary had before worn when she first entered Silver-hall. She had a letter with her, which explained that Mr. Peaceful being unable to restrain her idle prating and bad conduct, it had occasioned the change in dress they had seen. Anger now filled their bosoms, that their daughter was not thought worthy of Mr. Henry, who, with his charming Mary, in a new dress he bought her, gladly took leave of these friends, and bent their way to Silver-hall, after a long tour in search of Mary's father, and were received with joy by Mr. Peaceful, who assigned Mary an apartment till the day

she was to meet her other sisters, which took place according to arrangement.

---

THE  
HISTORY OF  
MATILDA.

---

MATILDA, the third sister, had a heart of the softest mould, and was always remarkable for her scrupulous sense of honour. To give a good account of herself at the twelvemonth's end, and lead back her father before that period, were her greatest objects. "Not for the good of myself, but of all my sisters," said she, "am I now seeking my fortune; and I earnestly pray, if I cannot better their condition, I may not sully our good name." With thoughts like these, she wandered to some distance, till she sat down on a bank to rest. A fine canary bird perched on a stone in the middle of the road before her; it chirruped, and was pecking at something very earnestly, when a sparrow-hawk

darted to the spot, and seized the feathered innocent. Matilda knew enough of these cruel birds not to hesitate throwing her hat at it, which alarmed the winged savage, and he let the object of his prey fall without any material injury. She caught it up, and put it in her bosom; but who would think that its little feet were entangled in a fine silk net purse, which contained several half-crowns? Matilda thought more of the bird than the money, which she soon brought to by kindness, and gave it its offer of liberty; but the little Canary perched on her finger, chirruped in her face, and seemed to say, "I do not wish to leave you, if you wish me to stay." Matilda was charmed by this little trait of sensibility, and resolved to keep her Canary till necessity should compel her to part with it. "I will buy you a fine cage," said she, "when I have plenty of money, and you shall have a home when I have one: we are both travellers, and I hope to find somewhere as kind a protector as you shall find in me." But next the purse occupied her thoughts; it contained much money, and there was no owner. "It is not mine, and if I spend this money I cannot return it,

thought she; "therefore it must be sacred: though it does not look like the property of a poor person, it may belong to those who would do good to the poor."

She continued on slowly till she grew hungry; and a boy came up to her, who, at her request, led her to the hut of a man who caught birds; of him she bought a little wire cage, and some seed for the poor bird, who ate with the greatest eagerness. Having enquired if the bird-fancier had heard any thing of her poor father without success, she asked if any one had lately lost a purse on that road. "Yes," said the man, "have you found one?" Matilda replied in the affirmative. "Then," said he, "it is mine." "What is it made of?" said Matilda. "Of leather," said the man. "And what was in it?" said Matilda.—"Four ducats and copper coin," was the answer. "Then it is not yours," said Matilda; and she was going away, when the man stopped her, and said, he would have the purse, for he was sure it did not belong to her. "I have the best claim at present," said Matilda, "and you shall not have it;" but he was proceeding to force it from her, when she shrieked out, and an old woman of a

tattered appearance came hobbling up pretty fast. She soon extricated Matilda from the violence of the avaricious bird-catcher, and reprobated his conduct most severely. The old dame then conducted Matilda along, and Matilda assisted the old woman to walk. "I wish to find a place to sleep in to-night," said Matilda, "and I hope to-morrow to find the owner of this purse and bird." "You shall find a bed at least if you will come with me," said dame Audry; "though we are poor, and you have a purse, we will take nothing from you." "Thanks," replied Matilda; "but I will not make the poor poorer; part of this shall be yours."

As they passed on, they came to a well, and dame Audry wished to have some water. Matilda immediately let down the bucket, and, to her astonishment, found another purse at the bottom: it contained as much again as the former; and Matilda would fain have given it to the old woman, saying, it was justly hers; but the latter said, "I will take care of it for you, and you shall not find it decrease. But let us get on towards home, for night is coming on." They then walked on, and only met an old



soldier on a wooden leg, with scarcely a shoe on the other foot. He was clean, though poor, and this escaped not Matilda's notice, who put her hand in her purse, and said, "You have no shoes, and we ought to be feet to the lame; I will lend you enough to buy you a pair. "Why, my girl, you seem almost as poor as myself," said the soldier. "I have lost my leg in the wars, and have the other almost in the grave; but in return for what you give me, I will give you this little ivory box which I found on the road." They parted, and Matilda thought little of the box till they got to the dame's hut, when they opened it, and found a handsome ring of rubles in it, with the letters C. H. Matilda and the old woman toddled home very well pleased with their booty; nevertheless Matilda could not help expressing a wish that she might find out the right owners. When they arrived at the old woman's hut, where every thing showed great house wifery and neatness, Matilda entertained her kind hostess with the narrative of her family, and the engagement she was under to meet her sisters in a twelve-month's time. "Well," said dame Audry, "you shall stay here till I can hear

of something better for you; and you may depend upon it reward always follows good conduct." Matilda slept soundly that night, rose early next morning, and put every thing in as much order as she could to save the old dame trouble. This Mrs. Audry took very kind, and at breakfast informed her young visitor that she had seen better days, but now she was grown old and poor, her former equals would not look upon her, and the young and giddy made a jest of her.— "But I will not do so," said Matilda; "the young look only at appearances, and they judge rather with their eye than their understanding." "Very true," replied Mrs. Audry; "it is a good maxim, and mind you do not forget it, Matilda."

A few weeks had passed over, when a well-dressed looking man entered the cottage, and got into conversation with Matilda: he gave her a few half pence for a mug of beer, and he joined the old lady in conversation. Matilda soon told him all her story, showed him the bird she had saved, and the purse she had found, and the ivory box given to her. He asked to look at them, examined the contents very minutely, and at taking leave presented

Matilda with a few pence, saying he would soon call again. The old lady said "I do not much like the looks of that man; but, as he has not taken any thing from us, it is all very well." "Indeed," said Matilda, "I thought he eyed the purses very much, and felt the money very eagerly; but as he will call again soon, we will know something more about him."

In the afternoon of that day, the old lady and Matilda took a walk on the common, and a pretty young lady met them; the lady slipped down in stepping on some stones in the shallow stream, and Matilda flew to raise her up, and offer her own shoes, which were dry. This the lady accepted, and returned to their cottage with them. Here every thing was done to accommodate her, and a good fire quickly repaired the little injury she had received. "It is singular," said the young lady, "I am always unlucky when I come this way; the other day I lost my purse!" "And I found one," said Matilda, "and I will let you see it." "This is, indeed, my purse," said the young lady, "and there was five half-crowns in it." "It must be yours," said Matilda, "and I am happy we have found the

right owner at last. Matilda gave the purse into the young lady's hand, who on taking out the money said, "The purse certainly resembles mine; but here is a Louis-d'or which was not in mine. No, I cannot take it, because I did not lose that sum." "How strange this is!" exclaimed Matilda, "the more I strive to give back what is not my own, the more it increases." Matilda then told the story of the ring she had found, in the box; but as this would not fit the young lady it was passed over, and she took her leave, begging that Mrs. Audry would let Matilda pass a few weeks at her house whenever she could spare her. They parted much pleased with the young lady, and Matilda was much delighted with the increase of her store, which, in truth, had been before augmented by the stranger, of whom they had formed an ill suspicion.

It now happened that the old dame was taken very ill, and the money in Matilda's purse all went to relieve her in sickness. "Alas!" said she, "what shall we do when that is gone? I will go to yonder great house on the edge of the mountain, and present my Canary bird; who can tell but some kind lady may take a fancy

to it, and purchase it since I cannot find the owner." This was agreed on, and Matilda went with the bird : she told the object of her visit, and offered it for sale. "To be sure," said the lady of the house, "it appears to me to be the same bird we have lost, and offered so much to find. I see by the mark on its wing it is the same ; and though you have not, young woman, come to claim the reward, you are entitled to it." Here Matilda told the manner in which she had preserved it. "Not only, therefore" continued the lady, "for your humanity, but for the sake of poor dame Audry, you shall have two guineas for your trouble." Matilda replied that she was not entitled to any thing for restoring the bird to the right owner, but to dame Audry it would indeed be a charity. "You shall have two guineas more for your sentiment," said Lady Heartfree, "and let the good woman want for nothing." Matilda went back full of joy ; but, alas ! when she came home, what pen can paint her distress ! Dame Audry was not there ; nor did she return any more. Three days Matilda remained there, terrified at being alone, and she went over to the house before mentioned,

which was Lady Heartfree's, to tell her tale, and implore protection. This was readily granted, and every thing in the cottage was taken possession of for Matilda's use, if dame Audry were not heard of again. In searching out several corners of the hovel were found bags of money, written on, "A portion for the wife of my son Charles; on another, "For the lady whom the ruby ring shall fit;" and another, "For the good daughter of an insane widowed father! All those were taken care of, and carefully put by when Matilda and Lady Heartfree arrived at the latter's residence.

Matilda was so docile and good tempered, that she made friends of every one; and as she very readily acquired all that was taught her, she was introduced into the best company. Lady Heartfree every year paid a visit to a worthy friend and his wife, who lived seven miles off, and staid a few weeks. It should be mentioned that seven months had elapsed of Matilda's time, during which Matilda often expressed her fears that she was intrusive and burthensome; but this very apprehension only served to confirm her stay. Mrs. Heartfree was delighted with her young friend, which was an in-



stance that good conduct will find friends where money cannot preserve them. At length, the day arrived when they reached Pleasant Lodge, and a more pleasant spot could no where be seen. Fruit, flowers, rivulets, and serpentine walks, ornamented all the inclosures of this enchanting spot. They were introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Hoffman at a time when they were sitting in a beautiful pavilion in the garden. Mrs. Heartfree and Matilda were well received; but the eyes of Matilda were rivited on the features of the lady, and in spite of her kind notice she remained absorbed in thought, as she was confident she had seen her features before. At night, Matilda was sent for to attend Mrs. Hoffman in her private room; but she was almost ready to sink to the ground when she saw dame Audry sitting in a chair, in the same dress as when she was alive! "Do not be alarmed, my dear," said Mrs. Hoffman, "dame Audry and Mrs. Hoffman are the same person: I disguised myself to try your disposition. I left the hovel to return home, and from Lady Heartfree's report of your subsequent conduct, you will have nothing to regret.—Consider yourself at home here. My son will return from college soon, and

if he and his father view you in the same light that I do, I shall consider that you want not wealth, if you have every other possession but that." Matilda bowed, and affectionately kissed her hand, and only added, "I hope it will be the last time I shall grieve for your sudden loss."

Another mystery now also unfolded itself; and this was, that the stranger who had called at the hovel was Mr. Hoffman. Matilda now begged that she might return the property found there; but this Mr. H. declined, as it was at Lord Heartfree's will to dispose of it according to the conditions on the labels. In one month after this time, the blooming young Charles returned from a tour he had been taking round the Neapolitan domains. He day by day became more enamoured with Matilda, and, at length, declared his intention, with his parents' approbation, to nominate her, when they thought proper, his intended bride. This was highly approved; and the agreement having been signed to take place that day two years, as they were yet thought too young, a day of festivity was held on the occasion. Then it was that Lady Heartfree gave the sums into the hands of Matilda, saying, "You are the wife elect of Charles, there-

fore the bag is yours · you are in search of a lost wandering father, therefore this bag is your's; and now here is the ruby ring found in the ivory box, if that will fit you; this third bag also is yours." Matilda tried it on, and it fitted exactly. She was overwhelmed with her feelings due to the goodness of God, and the gratitude of her friends. Taking the bag of gold, she returned them into the hands of Lady Heartfree, and gave the ring to Charles to keep, till their wedding day. The young couple went on a journey till the day arrived in which she was to meet her sisters, till which time we shall leave her to look after the next sister.

---

THE  
HISTORY OF  
MARTHA.

---

MARTHA, whom we shall call by the familiar name of Patty, took leave of her sisters with a sorrowful heart, and kissed

them all very affectionately. It was a new world she was about to enter into, and perhaps she was as little qualified as any of her sisters to bustle through it.— She turned over the dollar she had received, and thought of the words of our Saviour, “To him that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even the little that he hath.” She looked at the parable of the steward, who laid up his talent in a napkin, and returned it to his lord unimproved; hence her anxiety was to prove herself of a different description.

She played with her money as she went on, and then put it into her pocket. After she had proceeded about three miles, she stopped to buy some cakes, and ask if any person had been seen on that road resembling her father. Obtaining no satisfactory intelligence, she had eaten the greater part of her cakes, when she found her dollar was missing; it had dropped through a hole in her left hand pocket, which she had quite forgotten. The people accused her of a dishonest purpose; but Patty promised so faithfully, if she recovered the money, to repay them, that they let her go. She had now to retrace almost all the steps she

had taken, but could not find it. Much dejected at the loss, as she was returning, she stepped out of the main path to gather some blackberries, and saw an old hermit sitting at the side of a pretty water-fall. He held some sealed papers in his hand, which he said contained a sure mode to make any one wise and rich. "Ah!" said Patty, "I would have bought one, for it must be money well laid out; but unfortunately I have lost all I had in my way hither." "Well, then," said the hermit, "I will give you some for what you have lost; money is of little use to me except to do good with." He then surprised Patty with giving her her own dollar, which he had picked up soon after she had lost it. Patty now gave him a shilling for the packet that was to do such great things for her, and when she had quitted the hermit, she sat down on the first stone and opened it, thinking to find some money in it; but there was nothing but these words:—

All is not good that glitters,  
Vice first yields sweets, then bitters;  
Beware of those you talk with,  
Like loves its like to walk with;  
Riches and Wisdom lie in virtue,  
Possess the last, and none will hurt you.

Patty felt rather disappointed at these words, and thought she knew all this advice before. While she sat ruminating on being so taken in, a lass came up to her, and asked if she would earn a few pence, and lend her a hand to carry a few things to a neighbouring cottage. Patty replied in the affirmative; and they entered into conversation, during which Patty learned that her young companion Panza had also spoken to the hermit, who had offered her a paper; which, on finding him infirm, she had snatched from his hand, and had run away with; this she called good fun. Patty ventured to censure this conduct; but Panza only laughed at it. As she could not read, Patty broke open the paper, and read the following lines:—

Dishonest deeds to mis'ry tend,  
The index of a fatal end!

“Fine nonsense!” said Panza; “but come, we will take a walk together, and spend a pleasant day at the neighbouring village fair.” “Very good,” said Patty; “but we must have money to spend, and I have none to spare.” “Never mind that,” said Panza, “I will soon get some.”



After they had walked round the fair, Panza stationed Patty at a corner and went away; but soon returned with a small box, and gave it into her hand, bidding her keep it till she returned.—Patty soon saw her coming with a small bundle; but a cry of stop thief, and a noise of some people hallooing and shouting after Panza, occasioned Patty to turn round and look, but the girl flew before them, for these people were coming to take her, so Patty ran down a side road, made her way into the forest, and was soon lost in the quantity of trees. The other girl was taken; but of this Patty was ignorant. After she had run till she was quite exhausted, fancying that she heard a footstep approach when only a leaf fell, she sat down under an aged oak quite hungry and sorrowful. Now did her reflections begin to enter on the imprudent step she had taken, and the value of the advice contained in the hermit's paper. How little did she feel herself in her own eyes, to have flown merely because her companion had done so; hence she would have given a great deal never to have known her; for the very act of concealing herself now implied guilt or shame.

She arose from the tree, afraid to return to the village, and was wandering about in tears, when suddenly she stamped her foot with vexation three times on the ground, and a trap door suddenly opened, and a man in a dark dress, and a copper mask on, came up. With one fling of his robe he covered the form of Patty, and grasping her in his arms descended.

Dread and horror filled the bosom of Patty, who gave herself up for lost. When she had descended into the under apartment, he demanded her business there, and what was in the casket under her arm. Patty told all the story, and the man replied in a harsh voice, "We are placed here as the guardians of the forest against rogues and vagabonds. You have taken what probably another has stolen; so first we shall have this casket cried through the village, and when the owner is found we shall deliver you up to him, till which time you will do penance here as a punishment, and remain till the owner is found." Day by day was poor Patty condemned to do some drudgery, or to receive some penance for her fault. One strange thing belongeth to the casket, that no one could

open it ; it was made of glass, apparently without any opening. It contained some papers inside which could not be got at. Three months elapsed in this dreary manner, when one day one of the underground inmates of this abode was taken suddenly ill, and the hermit was sent for to administer some remedy. He had lived in that retired spot for many years, dejected, and was accounted almost out of his mind. He knew Patty again, who with deep anguish told him of the fault she had been guilty of, and begged his advice. When she had told all her story, he asked to see the casket, and, on beholding it, and seeing the direction to the Count Reybaz, he became in an extacy of joy ! He embraced Patty ; called her his preserver, his guardian angel, and said that she had brought him again to life and liberty. By means of a magnet he drew a spring in the casket, and the lid flew up, in which was a key that opened a box inside. Inside this was a piece of vellum, which contained an order for his restoration to his estates, and a free pardon ; he had, indeed, been a noble of the realm ; but was banished, and had taken to live disguised as a hermit, till the change of ministry at court, when the arch-

bishop obtained his pardon. He had always stated to him the manner in which he would convey the instrument in his favour, and given him the magnetic key, which alone could open the box. He had sent the box by a servant, who, in showing it as a curiosity, had exposed it to the eyes of observing thieves, who had waited an opportunity to steal it, and had conveyed it away at that juncture to Panza, who after giving it to Patty had returned for some more things. There was no longer cause for detaining Patty in this dreadful abode; the hermit was now changed into the nobleman, and took Patty home to his country seat near Naples, and there had her tenderly taken care of. She always remembered the lesson he had given her in his sealed paper; but it was otherwise with Panza, who, proceeding from vice to vice, was at last sentenced to be hung for robbing a child of its clothes, and leaving the little innocent to starve in a field. This sentence was mitigated into a severe whipping, by the intercession of Patty, who more and more esteemed her kind benefactor. Every month he doubled her dollar, and at her departure he gave her the little magical box she had innocently

received, though stolen, and filled it with gold, before she set off to meet her anxious sisters on the day appointed.

~~~~~

THE
HISTORY OF
CAROLINE.

==

THIS amiable daughter was the most serious of all her sisters. She received very early impressions of her duty to God, and the excellence of love to her parents; she therefore prayed for her father's restoration, and that she might find all her sisters benefited and improved by their different journeys. She had travelled a great part of the day, after setting out, and had only purchased some apples and ginger-bread, when she turned into a cross path that led her into a neat village church-yard. Graves bound with osiers, showed the resting-places of the humble dead, and here and there a proud stone raised its head, and told the reader

bishop obtained his pardon. He had always stated to him the manner in which he would convey the instrument in his favour, and given him the magnetic key, which alone could open the box. He had sent the box by a servant, who, in showing it as a curiosity, had exposed it to the eyes of observing thieves, who had waited an opportunity to steal it, and had conveyed it away at that juncture to Panza, who after giving it to Patty had returned for some more things. There was no longer cause for detaining Patty in this dreadful abode; the hermit was now changed into the nobleman, and took Patty home to his country seat near Naples, and there had her tenderly taken care of. She always remembered the lesson he had given her in his sealed paper; but it was otherwise with Panza, who, proceeding from vice to vice, was at last sentenced to be hung for robbing a child of its clothes, and leaving the little innocent to starve in a field. This sentence was mitigated into a severe whipping, by the intercession of Patty, who more and more esteemed her kind benefactor. Every month he doubled her dollar, and at her departure he gave her the little magical box she had innocently

received, though stolen, and filled it with gold, before she set off to meet her anxious sisters on the day appointed.

THE
HISTORY OF
CAROLINE.

THIS amiable daughter was the most serious of all her sisters. She received very early impressions of her duty to God, and the excellence of love to her parents; she therefore prayed for her father's restoration, and that she might find all her sisters benefited and improved by their different journeys. She had travelled a great part of the day, after setting out, and had only purchased some apples and ginger-bread, when she turned into a cross path that led her into a neat village church-yard. Graves bound with osiers, showed the resting-places of the humble dead, and here and there a proud stone raised its head, and told the reader

that the greatest must return to dust. In *this* spot was a tomb erected by filial piety ; in *that*, one to conjugal love, or to infant roses nipped in the bud. Caroline's attention was particularly engaged by an inscription on a monument from a fond son to a tender father, who by his misfortunes had died insane. It was similar to her own case, and the luxury of grief stole into her bosom. Her eyes bore testimony to her feelings, as she thought that whenever it was in her power she would pay the same tribute to her father's memory. Absorbed in reflections like these, she did not notice the approach of a young clergyman, who asked her why she wept. Caroline artlessly told him her tears were excited by sympathy. "He must have been a good son," said Caroline, "and I hope the love he shewed his father is amply returned into his bosom. Do you know this family of Reichard, sir?" The clergyman said he did, and added that the son had placed that inscription there to honour his father, and not to vaunt himself." When the reverend gentleman understood that Caroline was destined to seek her fortune for a twelvemonth, he asked her to pass a few days with him,

which she gladly accepted. After they had been in doors a little while, and were seated at supper, Caroline heard the clergyman called by the name of Mr. Reichard, and she felt confused, for it immediately struck her that the pious son she had innocently been praising was the master of the house she was in. Indeed, this she soon learned from the conversation which passed at table, which turned upon the duty of children to parents, and the reward which awaits filial duty in this world, and that which is to come. They afterwards played at puzzles with Mr. Reichard's two daughters, and Caroline acquitted herself so well, that she received a few pence as a reward. "What will you do with your money?" said Mr. Reichard. "I shall save it," said Caroline, "till Sunday; part of it I will put in the poor-box, and spend the rest in books; the good little books I give away, I shall get something for in return." In this manner they passed the evening, and after prayers retired to rest. In the morning Caroline was the first to attend the duty of thanks for protection through the night, and was so attentive to Miss Reichard, about her

own age, that the latter seemed much attached to her.

When Sunday came, Caroline's deportment at church was noticed by many of the most serious parishioners ; and the melodious tones of her voice excited delight by its sweetness as well as strength. That evening there was a funeral in the vaults of the church, and many persons attended. Caroline went down among the rest, and, walking through the different avenues considering the inscriptions, she got shut in, and was obliged to pass the night in that cold and terrifying place. She ran to all the gratings ; but they admitted only air, and nothing surrounded her but the emblems of mortality. As the hour of midnight approached, all those terrors increased which so much appeal the strongest heart when surrounded by the dead, and spirits are supposed to make their appearance. Caroline, however, had too much sense to believe in such idle fancies, and too much courage to fear apparitions, though it must be confessed her situation was most solitary and awful. If she spoke, her voice sounded through the arched passages ; and when she walked, the echo of her footsteps made

her suppose other feet were advancing. In this fearful solitude she amused herself by singing that beautiful psalm, "The Lord my pasture shall prepare ;" and, just as she came to the line, "And all my midnight hours defend," a pair of fiery eyes stared full upon her ; they advanced, as she receded, and were followed by another pair larger and brighter—her terror increased, because she could not account for the singularity, till the noise of one cat mewing to the other explained the mystery.

It was yet many hours to day-light. The clock tolled ten, eleven, twelve, and one, when she heard the grated door, that opened to the vaults, unlocked, and saw two dark lanterns descend the stairs, followed by two men. They were indeed real causes of terror, as they had not come to seek poor Caroline, but were plunderers of the dead.—Caroline hid herself in a nook till they had passed, when the awfulness of their masked appearance filled her with terror. They immediately began to break open the vault in which the funeral had taken place, and proceeded to take the body out of the coffin, which report had said was buried with some valuable jewels on and rings.

They were very busily engaged in their awful business, when Caroline thought if she could reach the grated door through which they had passed, she might not only get away, but alarm the village and have them taken in the fact. She had proceeded very cautiously past the vault till something in the dark caught hold of her gown, and gave her a violent pull back,—it was a hook in the wall; but such was her alarm, that she fell down, and lay senseless with affright. The men were alarmed; one of whom running forward, fell down over Caroline, who was quickly seized and brought to his companion. As she lay half dead with terror, she heard them talking of the manner in which they should dispose of her. The most violent of the two was for killing her, and throwing her into the vault; but the younger one insisted that it was more cruel to bury her alive in the vault.—This the other savage one agreed to, and such now threatened to be the fate of poor Caroline. In vain Caroline wept, knelt, and intreated. She was pushed into the melancholy vault, and clang so fast to one of the robbers, that she tore off part of the skirt of his coat before he could

loose her hands. Having turned the key upon her, and locked her in with the dead body, they departed.

The fate of Caroline seemed now to be past remedy. The family of Mr. Reichard were in the greatest alarm at her disappearance; and a reward was offered to any one who could give intelligence where she might be found. This operated on one of the robbers, who, from humanity and a wish to turn this to his own account, resolved to save her. He therefore came at night, forced his way into the vault, as before, and let Caroline out, just as she was at the point of sinking into the arms of death. Having blind-folded her, he took her in his arms, for she was too much exhausted to walk or speak, and carried her to a distance from the village on a wild common, where he put her down, and left her. Finding herself alone, Caroline pulled off the bandage, and being faint and hungry, crawled to the only cottage in sight for relief. Here the woman was very kind to her, gave her something warm and comfortable, and put her to bed. In the mean time, the woman went to Mr. Reichard, stated the circumstance, and claimed the reward. Mr. Reichard immediately flew

to the cottage, embraced the poor Caroline, and had her taken home, where in a few days she perfectly recovered. The woman received the reward, who was, in fact, no other than the merciful robber's wife. All the villagers were struck with horror at the desperate conduct of the villain; and the family of the deceased lady offered any sum of money for their detection; which was brought about in this manner. After Caroline had passed a few months at Mr. Reichard's, she went with his daughters to visit a young nobleman near that county. He was at that time in want of a gardener and his wife, and application was made by a man and woman, one of whom had been, as it will appear, the means of saving Caroline's life. They were hired to the place, and had been in it about three weeks when the labourer left his jacket in the garden where Caroline was walking. She observed a piece torn out of it, which corresponded, as she thought with a piece she had torn out when she was in the vault. The button on this piece also matched with the others; and she had no doubt he was one of the men. Caroline immediately conveyed her suspicions to the family; the vault was search-

ed—the piece was found—and the man was seized. She had frequently felt a kind of dread at this man, and the tone of his voice also convinced Caroline: he was immediately taken to the vault, and asked to put his hand upon the coffin of the deceased, and swear that he knew nothing of the sacrilegious transaction. The man at first solemnly denied it; but when the piece of his jacket was found to match exactly with that he had on, he trembled, and begged, as he had opposed Caroline's being killed, they would show mercy to him, and he would inform them of his companion, who was the principal. This proved to be the Sexton himself, whose house was searched, and some of the rich clothes of the deceased were discovered. This man was tried and executed in the church-yard, and his body hung in chains there; the other was sent out of the country, and the family would make a present of the reward to Caroline, whose recollection and prudent courage had so well supported her through this cruel outrage. When she returned to Mr. Reichard's, he wished to know what she would do with her reward? "Ah, that I'll leave to you, kind Sir," said Caroline; "you have been

good to me: if my father should be found, he may want it for his comfort." "We will lay it up," said Mr. Reichard, "to assist you and improve your education, if he should not want it."—Shortly after Caroline was placed as a young scholar in a pious seminary till the day of meeting her sisters came; and on that day she set off with her pockets full of presents to meet them, and with what is better than gold, an assurance of friendship, accompanied by one of Mr. Reichard's servants in a handsome chaise, with an order to return to Mr. Reichard's when she should feel inclined.

THE
HISTORIES OF
CHARLOTTE
AND
EMILY.

CHARLOTTE was a girl of a good disposition, but loved ease rather than exertion. Like many children, who see

only the objects immediately before them, she thought not for the morrow, nor regretted the mis-spent time of yesterday. After kissing her sisters, she took that road which led from the gate by a brook, and walked upon a smooth even path, beautifully overhung with tall and umbrageous trees. A natural fountain slaked her thirst, and the vine here and there overhanging the dwarf paling, she made a pleasant repast, added to some sweet cakes she had purchased. She sauntered very pleasantly along till she came to a road that divided into two branches, in opposite directions. Charlotte was puzzled which to choose; but she soon decided upon reading the words upon the direction post. That to the north, said, "To the palace of Pastime;" the other "To the Mansion of Merit." Charlotte took the latter path; but she had not advanced a great way before the path became broken, water intersected the road; here it was boggy, and there rocky, and, in short, the mansion she wished to reach lay a considerable distance on a rocky eminence, and seemed so difficult of access, that Charlotte thought she had better turn her back on the road to Merit, and try that of Pastime. (H 2)

While Charlotte was on her way, at a sudden turn of the road she met her sister Emily. Their joy and surprise were equally great, for they were twins, and the middle sisters of the twelve. Emily was on the road back from the Palace of Pastime, and was going to that of Merit, being persuaded by an old hermit to avoid it. Charlotte laughed at the cautions of the old man, but Emily was the wisest of the two; and after some time spent in endeavouring to convince each other, they separated. After many dangers surmounted, Emily found the road easier, and at last pleasant, and was received with a hearty welcome by the good mistress of the Mansion of Merit.—Here her occupation consisted in a close attendance upon all that was really necessary and useful; and at the end of six months she came out, with a recommendation, which procured her employment at the first gentleman's abode where she offered herself; with whom she remained two months, and was then recommended into the family of a Countess, where she became so great a favourite, that she received much in handsome clothes and money, and set off to meet her sisters, with a letter of praise, and the lady's ring on her finger.

As for Charlotte, when she came out at six months' end of the Palace of Pastime, she had learned only dress and frivolity, which is the way to kill time, not improve it; she was fit neither for the kitchen nor the parlour, and getting no employ, from the aversion all good and wise people had to any one coming from that residence, she wandered about quite distressed, and at last took refuge in the Mansion of Merit, where she passed her remaining six months in unlearning all that she had learned before; and set off to meet her sisters, with no other recommendation than a better character than when she entered:—so much do pride and the love of ease destroy our success and good name.

~~~~~

THE  
HISTORY OF  
BETSY.

==

THIS sister followed Emily in order, and was eager to take a great range in

search of adventures. She thought, like many others, that any country was better than her own. She made her way from place to place, till she came down to a sea-port town, at the same time never forgetting to enquire for her poor father. At the last place she was engaged by a captain's lady to attend her, who was going a voyage to sea with her husband. Betsy was pleased, and went on-board the vessel; but they had not long sailed before a dreadful sea-sickness assailed her, and she would have given any thing to have been in her native mountains. The next trial was an awful storm; when lightning, thunder, and the howling wind, all united to threaten death, with all its horrors; and a second time Betsy regretted she had left the road that led to Cruel Castle. In the third misfortune the vessel had a dreadful engagement with a piratical sloop, and the slaughter was terrible on both sides, which again made Betsy sigh for a peaceful home. The pirate, however, was sunk, and all the plunder he had made for three months before divided. The Captain's wife was wounded, and the vessel so damaged, that she was compelled to return to port. Betsy now at-

tended on her mistress, and for her courage during the action was admitted to a share of the great booty. The Captain's wife recovered in time to accompany Betsy to meet her sisters, and took several trinkets gained in the prize as presents to Lady Dreadful, and as testimonials of Betsy's good conduct during her absence.

~~~~~

THE
HISTORY OF
FANNY.

==

FANNY set out with the same feelings as her sisters.—She walked till she overtook a waggon at an ale-house door, and being tired, she got up when it proceeded. A poor child about her own age was there, and they soon fell into conversation. Fanny quickly found that she was going to seek her fortune as well as herself. “My mother,” said the little stranger, “is too poor to keep four of us,

and so ill, that she cannot work. My father died lately from accident, and soon, I fear, I shall have neither father nor mother!" This brought tears into the eyes of Fanny, whose situation was nearly the same. When they came to a large town they alighted, and went to several great houses to ask for employment; but few wanted servants, and all said they were too young, and some even scolded them for quitting their home. The night set in very dark and cloudy, and they had not yet got a lodging, so thought they could rest in the waggon all night; and Fanny spent part of her money to relieve her companion; but as this could not be, they got into a cart-house, and laid down on some straw in the cart. Here in the dead of the night came in two men, who uncorked a bottle or two and sat down to drink. They then planned the manner in which they should rob and murder on the following night a rich old gentleman, who lived above three miles from the village. The poor children lay as still as mice, till the men had gone out, when Phœbe was for running away, but Fanny said "No; the wickedness of these men may turn to our good. We may render ourselves a service,

and prevent the threatened mischief." They enquired out the residence of the old gentleman, which lay on the common, and was very lonely. But here we must mention that the artfulness of Fanny's companion was of great injury to her; for she took an opportunity of quitting her kind fellow traveller, thinking that by going to the gentleman alone, and making the story known first, she would get whatever reward might be offered. Fanny was very much grieved that her companion had quitted her, and, as she was unacquainted with her motive, she thought that some accident might have happened to her; and she lost some time in looking about. In the mean time, the artful girl had knocked at the door of the house, and being taken to the master of it, had told all that had passed with the men; but the story gained no credit, and she was dismissed with disgrace.

In little more than an hour after came Fanny, who told a similar tale, and was laughed at for coming to the same house where the other girl had just been. "The story she has told is true," said Fanny, "and though I now perceive she ran away from me to get the first to you, I am pleased and rewarded if you

will let me stay here to-night." "Well," said Mr. Olphan, the old gentleman, "you may call again to-morrow, but we have no room for you to night." Fanny was much disappointed in not staying, and at a loss what to do; she thought only of going to the poor-house to request protection for the night. In her way she came up to a wood-cutter, who received her into his cottage, and told her how ill the usurer had used him. Fanny, in return, told her story about the thieves, and the woodman directly set out to meet them, brought them to his cottage, and contrived with them to murder the old gentleman the next week; but when the night came, he laid wait for them in Olphan's house, and shot them both. He then went into Olphan's bed-chamber, and, armed as he was, told him what he had done. The old man asked what reward he should give him and Fanny. "Only," said the woodman, "three cubic yards of earth out of your garden." This was agreed to, and as Corsan knew where he had buried some of his pots of gold, he made a great booty. This he divided between himself and Fanny, who then became very rich.—As for Fanny's former compa-

nion, she wandered about very much distressed, and remained with a poor laundress till she came to Corsan's house, where Fanny kindly got her admitted, and she remained there when Fanny set out for the castle.

THE
HISTORY OF
LUCY.

LUCY was the tenth sister, and had but a heavy heart at parting with her relatives. She wandered till she came down to a river's side, and seeing some children in a boat, she got into it with them. By their playing in the boat, it got off from the shore, and was floated down by the tide. From the shock on coming against a stone, one of the children was thrown out, and while Lucy, with one hand hold of the boat supported herself, with the other she caught the little boy floating close by. This courageous adventure coming to the ears of the father

of the child, he would have Lucy to see him, and finding, though she was poor, she was tractable, he put her in his kitchen under the maid-servant. Poor Lucy soon discovered so much villany in the conduct of the cook, that she could not help telling her worthy patron; for she overheard a plan between her and a man she privately let into the house, to get into it at night, and murder the family, for the sake of the jewels and gold in the house. The gentleman being fully convinced of the truth of this, took Lucy into great favour, thinking she was sent by providence not only to preserve his son's life, but his own. Lucy had the care of the singing birds and the poultry, and held several other little offices so well, that she was sent to school, and received new clothing and pocket money. Here she remained her twelvemonth, and then set out for Cruel Castle, with a letter of recommendation in her pocket, and a charge to return back as soon as her sisters would permit.

THE
HISTORY OF
SOPHY.

SOPHY was the eleventh sister, and had always a great taste for needle work. She sighed when she left her sisters, and followed the path till a great road conducted to a town. She stopped at a window, where some roses were displayed, and looked at them very anxiously till she saw a bill in the window—"A young person wanted here." Sophy went in, and was so anxious to try, that the good lady overlooked her youth, and took her in. Her story excited pity, and her aptitude and obliging behaviour soon made a friend of her mistress. She became well known to many ladies by waiting upon them, and when they knew that Sophy had made some of the nicest parts of their dress, she was caressed and rewarded. The time at length arrived when she was to meet her sisters, and

her kind mistress made her work a most beautiful robe, as a present to Lady Dreadful, which bore her name in rich embroidery. Highly delighted with this token of the manner in which she had passed her time, she set off with her work, and the nearest coach carried her within a few miles of the Castle, where she arrived at the hour appointed.

THE
HISTORY OF
ROSA.

ROSA was the youngest, and as lovely as May. Her complexion was that of health, her eyes those of innocence, her lips those of truth; her form was in exact proportion. She had wandered till she was tired, and was asked by a poor blind man the path to the next cottage. "Ah!" said Rosa, "the path lies across yon hill, and there are many rugged places and steep ascents." "What

shall I give you to lead me safely across," said Barclay, the blind man. "Nothing but your hand," said Rosa; "but good man, how came you so far alone?"—"The little boy I had engaged to conduct me has run away; and I would have given him something for his trouble!" "So much the better," replied Rosa; "for I will do the same thing for nothing." "Good, my child," said Barclay, "he that was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, will reward you in the next world; and I may be the means of rewarding you in this."

When they arrived at the house where the old man dwelt, he enquired into Rosa's story, and was much affected by it; the tears ran down his cheeks, though he had no eye-sight, and his heart was alive to that pity he so much needed himself. "You will want a supper and bed to night, and that you shall find in our cottage.—Here, dame, make up the cot for this little girl, and put some pan-cakes in the pan; if she will not be rewarded in pence she shall in pudding; and to morrow morning she shall lead me over to the old man of the grotto, and she shall see all his curious shells and pebble apartments. "Ah," said Rosa, I can

lead you much easier than you can keep me." "If either had plenty of money," said Barclay, "you should not leave me; I would take care of you as you have done of me." In this manner they conversed pleasantly till bed time, came, and Rosa lay down with a heart full of the pleasure of doing a good action. After breakfast was over, the blind man, conducted by Rosa, went about three miles to the old man's grotto, which was the abode of solitude and tranquillity. Its walls were ornamented with stones and shells of different colours, fancifully placed, and the ivy-crowned window looked upon a glassy pool, which was supplied by a natural cascade: the willow, the yew, and the cypress spread their impressive foliage in all directions, while a faint echo was heard of the distant convent vespers bell. Here Rosa partook of a pleasant repast of fruit, and had leave to run in the gardens where she pleased. The old man had given her a few peaches, blooming like herself, and Rosa was carelessly sauntering down an alley of trees, attracted by the sweet tones of a flute and a female voice. Soon she came to the bower, where a gentleman and lady in deep mourning were seated. She peeped playfully into the

bower, and would have ran away again, but the lady gave a shriek, and the gentleman was busy in assisting to recover her. "Can I run for any thing to do the lady good?" said Rosa. "You must not go," said the gentleman, "it is you have made her ill! What is your name? whence come you, and what do you do here?" Rosa told, in a humble manner, the cause of her being there. The lady, in a shower of tears, took her by the hand, pressed her to her bosom, and exclaimed, "You are the resemblance of my dear deceased Matilda; I doubted, at the moment, if she were not again alive when I first saw you: henceforth you shall live with me. If you will be as amiable as she was, you shall go home with us directly." "May I not lead the poor kind blind man back first?" said Rosa. "He shall go with us in our chariot," said the lady, "and it shall be your business to lead him frequently to our house, and in the mean time I will show you the spot in this solitary retreat, where my sweet Matilda lies." Rosa was conducted to a small chapel, in the wall of which was an elegant monument—"Sacred to the memory of Matilda Linden—the tribute of a fond mother to a darling child."—

the chapel was empty and solemn, and Rosa's spirits were depressed. "I will be a mother to you," said the weeping lady, "and my husband shall protect you. While you live, Matilda will exist under another name:—love and gratitude shall bind us together." Rosa knelt, kissed her hand, and said, "I will love you, if you are good to me; and you will be good to me as long as I deserve it." They afterwards joined the gentleman, who was well pleased with Rosa's answer, and his lady's adoption of her. They came here frequently to visit the tomb of their only child; and after leaving a present with the old man of the grotto, they took the good blind man in their chaise to his hovel, and what is better, they soon enabled him to find his way to their house alone, by giving Barclay a cottage close to their own. With this amiable family Rosa remained till the day twelvemonth came of meeting her sisters, proving that the eyes of the Lord are always upon those that love him.

CONCLUSION.

THE twelve sisters having arrived at the exact spot where they first commenced their journey, we shall take a brief view of the conduct of Lady Dreadful.

Lady Dreadful, equally punctual with her young friends, on the day appointed, sent out twelve beautiful ponies, with a groom leading each, to the spot where they were all to meet. By twelve at noon, Ann and her eleven sisters had met, and embraced each other, and were anxious to hear each other's adventures. The procession to the castle was very elegant, as the servants had brought a crimson velvet mantle, and a hat and feathers for each. Ann led the way, and was followed by the rest, decreasing in size to the youngest, till they came to the gates of Cruel Castle, when Lady Dreadful met them, and kissed them one by one. They then adjourned into the great hall, where refreshments were spread for them, and Lady Dreadful, seated in a high chair, heard all their adventures, and bestowed her praise as she thought they deserved. The lovers of Ann and Mary were admitted, and took their seats. At night, a good supper was prepared in the gothic chamber, and the whole party sat down. A raised seat was at one end of the table for Lady Dreadful, who, having now thrown off her frightful mask and old clothing, appeared a most lovely lady; and at the other end was two high

seats, a little removed from the table, which a damask curtain concealed. During the evening, and when all were seated, Lady Dreadful lamented that they had heard no tidings of their father, and asked them what they would now do for a mother. This revived in their little hearts the tenderest recollections, and they all began to melt into tears and sobs, when, lo! the curtain drew up, and they beheld their dear father and mother sitting in their usual dress, and looking well and hearty! The parents sprang to the children, and the children to the parents. The joy of all was complete. Their father, by the care of Lady Dreadful, who had employed unremitting means to find him, had recovered at the sight of his wife, whom she had caused to be removed to Cruel Castle, and there, by time and attention, had revived the spark of life remaining in her, for it must be recollected, it has not been stated that she was killed by the fall of the crag of the mountain, only bruised and mangled. The marriage of Ann was celebrated during the time that the family of the Furrows remained in the castle, and this was till Lady Dreadful could find a comfortable farm for them to re-





